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FOREIGN NEWS ON APPLES

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EUROPEAN APPLE MARKET PROSPECTS

The European market for American apples should be favorable for the balance of the season, according to a report from Fred A. Motz, Fruit Specialist in Europe for the Foreign Service of the Department of Agriculture. Domestic crops in England and Sweden are clearing up rapidly while in Holland, Belgium, Germany and France the small sized domestic crops have not been an important factor this year. The Spanish orange crop is not as large as last year and the recent political disturbances have further served to limit shipments. Canadian apples, particularly Nova Scotian, are likely to be scarcer after the first of the year than last year due to the smaller Canadian crop and to the large proportion already marketed. Last year the Canadian apple crop was about 24 per cent larger than this year. Apple imports into the United Kingdom from the Continent have been far below average because of the small continental crops. Trade reports and shipments to date indicate that Russian apple shipments to European markets will not bulk as large this season as last nor as large as earlier reports indicated. On the whole, the supply situation can be considered favorable to the marketing of American apples in Europe, but prices may not be as high as they would under normal purchasing power.

Great Britain

With the exception of the break in the market about the first of November, prices for American apples have held up fairly well in the British market. Purchasing power is limited and buyers are watching their purchases carefully. Furthermore, they are not laying in heavy stocks, but confining purchases to immediate requirements. There has been no speculation on the part of British buyers and many fine lots of fruit have been selling below cost price when supplies were heavy particularly British Columbia McIntosh, California Newtowns and a few Washington Jonathans.

The English crop has been pretty well cleared, dessert varieties being practically out of the way, with Bramley Seedlings and other cooking sorts being either held back by the growers, or exported to the Continent. Canadian supplies, both boxed and barreled, have been in predominance. Judging from varieties received, Nova Scotian growers made an attempt to market a large share of their crop, late winter varieties included, prior to November 15, the date terminating the period in which certain grades of American apples were restricted. Owing to the unusually strong demand on the Continent, many apples of American, Canadian and English origin have been reshipped to Rotterdam, Antwerp, Paris, Hamburg and Copenhagen.

Holland, Belgium, Germany and France

With the exception of Northern Italy, Southern Austria and Yugoslavia, all continental countries, which normally have an exportable surplus of apples, are importing substantial quantities. Buyers have been attending the Rotterdam and Antwerp sales from all over Europe and there has been little criticism of the quality of the fruit or the pack. Recently, however, the Rotterdam market

was overloaded with ripe and wasty fruit with the result that prices took a bad drop although good stock continued to sell for satisfactory prices. Markets in these countries have been active this season for American fruit and prices, despite the generally poor purchasing power, have been high. The markets especially in Germany, Holland and Belgium have taken more of a speculative turn than in the United Kingdom. The quality of the fruit offered at Hamburg has been good, although sizes have not been strictly in accordance with market preferences or requirements. Many small sizes in barreled fruit have found their way to the Hamburg market, while extreme difficulty is being experienced in obtaining long counts in boxed apples. Pears as well as apples have met with an active demand and large quantities have been received from America which returned satisfactory prices.

Denmark

The Copenhagen market, when compared with Hamburg and Rotterdam, has been somewhat disappointing. Although supplies have not been excessive, price lends have shown a substantial reduction under those ruling in nearby markets. Present values, however, show some improvement and the immediate outlook is favorable. Some Swedish, Italian and Bohemian apples have found their way into Copenhagen and, because of the strong continental demand, are being reshipped. In a short time local supplies should be out of the way, after which American apples can be offered without competition. Purchasing power is comparatively good in Denmark.

Sweden

The Swedish apple crop this year was the best in twelve years. Sweden is normally an importer of apples but owing to the large crop this year, considerable quantities are being exported. These have been selling at one cent to two cents per pound. The shipments consisted largely of ungraded cooking apples and were mainly sent to Holland and Germany. This unusual situation is not likely to occur again for sometime, nevertheless, it is another indication of the strong demand for apples on the Continent this year.

During the early part of the season importers of American apples were very pessimistic about the possibilities of bringing supplies from the United States because of the large domestic crop. The keeping quality of the crop, however, is reported as poor and the trade is of the opinion that most of it will be out of the way by the first of the year. The outlook for American apples after that time can be considered favorable as American apples will practically have the field to themselves. The economic position of Sweden is better than that of most European countries.